

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 6, 10-14, 16, 22, 25, 27, and 29-34 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if written to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

After entry of the present Amendment, claims 1-4, 7-19, 23, 25-36, 68, and 69 are pending.

Amendments to the Specification

The specification was objected to as having no discussion of Fig. 10 in either the "Brief Description of the Drawings" or the "Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments." The specification has been amended to include a description of Fig. 10 in the "Brief Description of the Drawings". The "Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments" does contain a discussion of Fig. 10, and the Applicant directs the Examiner's attention to page 25, lines 3-16 for the discussion of Fig. 10.

As requested by the Examiner, the specification has also been amended to replace attorney docket numbers with patent numbers to refer to several patents applications on page 9.

No new matter has been added by these amendments to the specification.

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-4, 7-19, 23, 25-36, 68, and 69 are pending. Claims 5, 6, 20-22, 24, 37, and 38 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 39-67 were directed to a non-elected invention and have also been cancelled without prejudice. New claims 68 and 69 have been added.

The Examiner has indicating that claims 6, 10-14, 16, 22, 25, 27, and 29-34 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if written to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In an effort to expedite prosecution of the present application, the Applicant has amended the claims so all of the claims currently pending are directed to subject matter that the Examiner has indicated is allowable. The

Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of the cancelled claims in a continuing application.

The Examiner indicated that original claim 6 was allowable. Original claim 6 depended from original claim 5 which, in turn, depended from original claim 1. Amended claim 1 incorporates all of the limitations of original claims 1, 5, and 6, and therefore, should be allowable as the Examiner has indicated. Original claims 5 and 6 have been cancelled, as the subject matter of those claims has been incorporated in to amended claim 1. Original claims 2, 3, 4, and 8, and amended claims 7 and 9 now depend from amended claim 1 and therefore should also be allowable.

The Examiner indicated that original claim 10 was allowable. Original claim 10 depended from original claim 1. Amended claim 10 incorporates all of the limitations of original claims 1 and 10, and should be allowable as indicated by the Examiner. The Examiner indicated that original claims 11-14 were allowable. Original claims 11-14 now depend from an allowable base claim, amended claim 10, and should be allowable.

Original claims 15, 17, and 18 now depend from an allowable base claim, amended claim 1, and should be allowable.

The Examiner indicated that original claim 16 was allowable. Original claim 16 depended from original claim 1. Amended claim 16 incorporates all of the limitations of original claims 1 and 16, and should be allowable as the Examiner has indicated.

The Examiner indicated that original claim 22 was allowable. Original claim 22 depended from original claims 19, 20, and 21. Amended claim 19 incorporates all of the limitations of original claims 19, 20, 21, and 22, and therefore, should be allowable as indicated by the Examiner. Original claims 20-22 have been cancelled. The Examiner also indicated that original claim 23 contained allowable subject matter. Amended claim 23 now depends from an allowable base claim, amended claim 19, and should also be allowable.

The Examiner indicated that original claim 25 was allowable. Original claim 25 depended from original claim 24 which depended from original claim 19. Amended claim 25 incorporates all of the limitations of original claims 19, 24, and 25, and therefore, should be allowable as the Examiner has indicated. Original claim 24 has been

cancelled. Original claims 26 and 28 have been amended to depend from an allowable base claim, amended claim 25, and should be allowable. The Examiner also indicated that original claim 27 contained allowable subject matter. Original claim 27 now depends from the amended claim 26 and an allowable base claim, amended claim 25, and should also be allowable.

The Examiner indicated that original claim 29 was allowable. Original claim 29 depended from original claim 19. Amended claim 29 incorporates all of the limitations of original claims 19 and 29, and should be allowable as the Examiner has indicated. The Examiner also indicated that original claims 30-33 contained allowable subject matter. Original claims 30-33 depend from amended claim 29 and should also be allowable.

The Examiner indicated that original claim 34 was allowable. Original claim 34 depended from original claim 19. Amended claim 34 incorporates all of the limitations of original claims 19 and 34, and should be allowable as the Examiner has indicated.

Original claims 35 and 36 now depend from an allowable base claim, amended claim 19, and should be allowable. New claims 68 and 69 contain the same limitations as original claims 35 and 36, but they depend from the allowable amended claim 29 and should also be allowable.

Original independent claims 37 and 38 have been cancelled.

As mentioned above, all of the currently pending claims have been amended to contain only subject matter that the Examiner indicated was allowable in the previous Office Action. No new matter has been added with any of the claim amendments.

Claim Rejections

Claim 37 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,222,494 to Baker, Jr. While the Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner, claim 37 has been cancelled, and the rejection has been rendered moot.

Various claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Baker, Jr. alone or in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,719,922 to Padjen et al. The Applicant respectfully submits that the original claims are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of Baker, Jr. alone or in combination with Padjen et al. The Applicant's arguments

will not be presented in this response, however, because all of the Examiner's rejections have been rendered moot by the amendments presented herein.

Based on the Examiner's indication of the allowable subject matter, and in order to expedite prosecution of the present application, the Applicant has amended the claims so that all claims pending after entry of the present amendment are directed to subject matter that the Examiner has indicated is allowable.

Information Disclosure Statements

The Examiner indicated that four Information Disclosure Statements have been received by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, but only two of the IDS documents appear in the file. Copies of the two IDS documents that are missing from the file are being submitted with this Amendment. These IDS documents were originally filed on April 25, 2000 (OIPE stamp May 1, 2000) and September 12, 2000 (OIPE stamp September 15, 2000). Copies of the returned postcards with OIPE stamps are enclosed as verification of the original filing dates. A copy of PCT Publication WO 97/31679 A2 is also enclosed. All other references cited in these IDS documents are U.S. Patents.

Power of Attorney

A Power of Attorney by Assignee appointing the firm of the undersigned attorney was originally filed on May 15, 2002. It appears that this Power of Attorney was not processed by the PTO, as the present application is not associated with our Customer Number, and the last Office Action was sent to the previous counsel. Therefore, a copy of this Power of Attorney is also being resubmitted herewith.

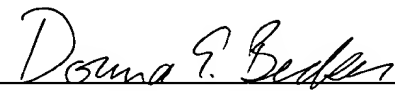
CONCLUSION

The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application and claims in light of the amendments and remarks presented herein. The Applicant believes that all claims are now in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a personal or telephonic interview would be helpful to terminate any issues which may remain in the prosecution of the application, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicant's attorney at the telephone number set forth herein below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required in the Application to Deposit Account No. 06-1135.

Respectfully submitted,

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